

Africa



Africa is home to many of the world's most spectacular species and diverse ecosystems. In East Africa, large herds of antelope and zebra cross the savannas in unparalleled migrations. The Congo Basin, the world's second largest forest block, spans the equator and supports three species of great apes. In the Indian Ocean, a near continuous string of coral reefs stretch from northern Kenya to South Africa. From the northern deserts of the Sahara to the southern Kalahari and across the savannah and forests of Central Africa, these diverse assemblages of wildlife species and habitats create the rich fabric of African nature.

Against this majestic backdrop, wildlife is confronted by an array of threats. Human population, illegal hunting and the conversion of forest into agriculture are increasing throughout Africa. The industrial exploitation of natural resources, such as mining, logging and petroleum exploration, is creating more and more roads into increasingly vulnerable refuges of wildlife habitat. In some countries, political instability undermines the ability of government agencies to protect and manage wildlife. To adequately meet these challenges, African wildlife professionals need not only strong scientific capacity, but also non-traditional skills such as community outreach, conflict resolution and coalition building.

The goal of the Wildlife Without Borders-Africa (WWB-Africa) Program is to assist African nations to develop individual and institutional capacity for biodiversity conservation in and around protected areas. Protected areas play a crucial dual role by providing an important refuge to safeguard key wildlife populations while also creating an



opportunity to earn valuable revenues and improve the livelihoods of neighboring communities. By raising the capacity for wildlife conservation throughout Africa, the WWB-Africa program meets a growing demand for new approaches to conservation. Additionally, the program provides support to mitigate the impact of extractive industries, climate change, human-wildlife conflict, illegal trade in bushmeat and wildlife disease. Target audiences for training and capacity building support include: wildlife managers, guards, rangers, protected area managers, outreach specialists, community leaders, educators and decision makers.



Top left: Envirovet veterinary labwork ©Val Beasley

Top right: Masaai Bushmeat Meeting ©James Evanson Kariuki

Above: Impala and Burchell's Zebra in Kenya's Maasai-Mara Game Reserve Richard Ruggiero/USFWS

The Wildlife Without Borders-Africa Program supports projects designed to strengthen the ability of African institutions and individuals to manage and conserve species, habitats and ecological processes for the benefit of the people of Africa and the world.

The Wildlife Without Borders Program defines capacity building as strengthening the ability of individuals and organizations to conserve biodiversity. Capacity building approaches include training, facilitating dialogue, program development, and provision of equipment and other resources. WWB-Africa builds capacity through our USFWS MENTOR Signature Initiative and through the African Small Grants program.

USFWS Signature Initiative: MENTOR Fellowship Program

Innovative new capacity building approaches are needed to address complex conservation challenges in Africa. The USFWS developed its Signature Initiative, the MENTOR Fellowship Program (Mentoring for ENvironmental Training in Outreach and Resource conservation), to build multidisciplinary teams of emerging African conservation leaders who work collaboratively through partnerships.

The FY 2008 to FY2009 MENTOR Program focused on the illegal and unsustainable bushmeat trade in East Africa. Bushmeat is on the rise from a burgeoning human population in the region. This illegal and unsustainable over-harvesting of wildlife for food and income is causing a reduction in numbers and diversity of wildlife. The USFWS MENTOR Fellowship Program built the capacity of a team of wildlife professionals from four East African countries (Kenya, Southern Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) to gain the requisite skills and work together across borders to alleviate the impact of the illegal bushmeat trade.

MENTOR Fellows undertook a unique combination of academic training and field-based implementation taught by conservation practitioners and academic experts at the College of African Wildlife Management in Tanzania. Out of the MENTOR program emerged the Bushmeat-free Eastern Africa Network (BEAN), a currently-evolving interdisciplinary and multi-institutional network

consisting of a wide variety of stakeholders who work collaboratively to raise awareness, share information and leverage resources to build partnerships and capacity to implement grassroots solutions to address bushmeat exploitation affecting protected and surrounding areas in eastern Africa. Funding in FY2009 and FY2010 enabled BEAN to apply a holistic approach to address bushmeat alternatives (income and protein), awareness, law enforcement, policy, monitoring and communications in key protected areas. USFWS plans to replicate the MENTOR model in other regions in order to build transboundary teams who work collaboratively to address key conservation threats in Africa.

African Small Grants

In FY 2010, WWB-Africa also funded vital capacity building efforts such as the Envirovet Summer Institute that uses a One Health approach. Envirovet brought together veterinarians, veterinary students and wildlife managers from around the world. It provided seven weeks of intensive lecture, laboratory and field experience in the area of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem health in developed and developing country contexts. The program highlighted the transdisciplinary cooperative nature of work for effective wildlife and ecosystem management and long-term problem solving. The training took place at field sites in Tanzania and the U.S.

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